



Bay Bridge Inauguration Poem

San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge East Span, September 2, 2013

for all bridge dreamers, bridge builders & bridge crossers

Self anchored self-sustaining a light onto itself
This arc that lifts us this arc that sings us as we pass
Bay Bridge – I see you now your new design risen

Above star-waters a new galaxy appears a new trillion
May we live in your safety in your carriage in your heart
May all your hours and all your lights embrace us once again

May we curl across your shoulders as bird-fish singers
May we be the bridge for a new time of beauty and peace
Let us thank the workers – artists of space and matter

One sound one tree one knitted *rebozo* shawl for our mother
Aloft she turns she protects renewed waves of children
Today we are born to wind-sky steel and turquoise choirs

We are filled with light-strength height-gratitude and violet
Ocean stillness we open our arms our bridge of many bridges
Everything is different now melodic silver harmonious

Everything is open now spiritual inhalation of the Pacific Rim
Voyages migrations the conversations of generations Viva!
The workers applaud now iron-workers painters welders planners

Architects engineers laborers drivers Viva!
Lifters callers crane operators Viva!
Cement mixers cable threaders Viva!

After the earthquake
We shall live – yes
We shall round dance and honor

Spider buggies comin' up!
Light poles hold 'em steady steady
Saddle template fit-up
North mainspan cable ready ready
Motion sensors booster pump expansion tank
Spider buggies comin' up!
Spider buggies comin' up!
Spider buggies comin' up!

We shall live in our luminescent loom of lights and cosmos yes
We shall hula dance in expansive unity once again today yes

Hand to hand shoulder to shoulder woven and winged dancer
Bumper to bumper cable rider to cable flyer call it out now
We shall swivel alive golden silver dark sequenced with joy

We shall live crossing into the other from one to the second
From the second to the linked infinity today the chain is cut and we
Are released again Oakland San Francisco earth to all earth

Ocean to sky-wind to star nebulae once again you and me – *we*
The people the people *El Pueblo* it is the people *Bay Bridge*
Hold on to each other move now rise now for the world to see

- Juan Felipe Herrera
Poet Laureate of California

